

(a) whether the Government propose to construct more marine fisheries cold storage plants in each island of Lakshadweep;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government propose to provide more incentives to fishermen of this island;

(d) if so, details therefor; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPALLY RANMCHANDDRAN): (a) There is no proposal with the Central Government, at present.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) to (e). Various Incentives/subsidy programmes sanctioned for the island for the benefit of fishermen include:-

1. Issue of mechanized boats to fishermen on subsidy (33-1/3% subsidy on the cost of engine and 20% subsidy on the cost of hull of boat).

2. Issue of engines to fishermen on hire purchase system on full cost to replace old engines of boats.

3. Issue of long-line fishing gear materials to fishermen for fabrication of long line gear for shark fishing with 25% subsidy.

4. 100% reimbursement of Central excise duty on HSD oil used by fishing vessels below 2CM length.

5. A National Welfare Scheme for active fishermen providing insurance coverage against death/disability.

In addition, National Cooperative De-

velopment corporation (NCDC) provides Financial assistance to cooperatives of fishermen for the creation of common infrastructural facilities and purchase of fishing inputs like boats, nets etc. with an element of 20-25% subsidy and at a concessional interest rate of 12% p.a. However, fishermen cooperative in Lakshadweep have not availed any assistance from NCDC so far.

New Passport Office at Vijayawada

4772. PROF. UMAREDDY VENKATESHWARLU: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to open a new passport office at Vijayawada, and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI MADHAVSINH SOLANKI): (a) and (b). A proposal to open new passport offices is under consideration. Their number, location and timing will depend on the available additional financial and manpower resources.

Setting up of marketing Development Fund

4773. SHIRIPRASRAMBARDWAJ: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to set up a marketing Development fund to provide Financial assistance to the members of Scheduled Casts and Scheduled Tribes to run petrol pumps and L.P.G. Agencies; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): (a) and (b). The matter is under consideration.